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MODIFICATIONS IN THE THEOLOGICAL CURRICULUM.

FOUR principal suggestions, indicated below by italics, are made in President Harper's article, "Shall the Theological Curriculum be Modified, and How?" (the AMERICAN JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY, Vol. III, pp. 45-66). The first two do not commend themselves to me ; with the last two I am in substantial agreement.

1. *The seminaries should make up certain deficiencies of college education, especially in science and psychology.*

Because some students come from small denominational colleges which give no instruction in those branches, it does not follow that the seminaries should provide it. If the third-rate colleges do not furnish it, students should take a year or two in a good scientific school, or, if they are enrolled as members of a seminary which is a department of a university, they can learn more in the scientific courses of the university than in the seminary. Law schools do not teach political economy and history, nor medical schools chemistry, for those studies belong to the college. Some years ago many law and medical students, even at Harvard, were from small colleges, or had never seen a college, and elementary instruction was given. But, in the interest of those professions and of the community, the standard of admission was raised and the schools limited to strictly professional education. The real difficulty for the seminaries is precisely opposite to lack of scientific knowledge. Many college students are taking the scientific rather than the classical course. Even at Dartmouth 49 per cent. are in the scientific department. In the universities a large majority do not elect Greek. Some of these men, late in their course, decide to become ministers, but, not having Greek, cannot enter the seminaries. Yet the education they have had is a good preparation for the ministry, as President Harper rightly argues. The seminaries should receive them and give such instruction in Greek as is needed. This very change has been made at Andover the present year. As to English literature, that is now taught in the colleges, and in the seminary there should be, not elementary instruction, but clubs for the study of the poets (which Andover has), while practice in writing should be gained by preparing essays in the various departments.

2. *The seminaries should prepare students for other kinds of Christian work besides preaching.*

With this suggestion I do not agree. The pastoral care always has been and always should be taught. Few churches have both a preacher and a pastor. Nine-tenths of the graduates will be clergymen in country parishes, and each must be preacher and pastor—the best possible arrangement; for to preach well the minister must know his people. Even in city churches, as a rule, the work is not divided among two or more ministers. Those who are to do special work, as secretaries of Christian associations or of charitable organizations, may profitably spend a year in the seminary, taking courses in the Bible, theology, and social science, for which no change in the curriculum is needed; or, still better, may attend schools established for the training of Christian workers. In the churches the laity should do a good part of the work and not turn it over to paid officials. The main object of a seminary is, and should be, the training of preachers. It is preaching the churches want. The seminaries should not attempt, on the one hand, to exercise the functions of a college, nor, on the other hand, the preparation of all kinds of Christian workers, but should be devoted to the training of preachers and pastors.

3. *There should be a considerable proportion of elective courses.*

To this I heartily assent. Certain studies, to be sure, are necessary to all preachers. Their profession is in itself an election of the Bible, theology, church history, and homiletics, just as the study of law and medicine is the pursuit of certain kinds of knowledge. But there should also be other courses made elective, and opportunity to specialize in one or another department. The chief additions are the history of religions and social ethics. After the first year the student should be encouraged to specialize on biblical, theological, or historical lines. At Andover (of which I speak because I know it best) more than half of the courses offered are elective, and every student is required to choose one-third of his work from electives. President Harper's elective dream is a very good description of the Andover that now is. It is the oldest seminary, not "of a century or more," but of ninety years ago; but it has departed widely from the original model, partly in subjects, and more in method, scope, and adaptation to the tastes of students.

4. *Hebrew and Greek should not be required of all students.*

Agreed, especially as to Hebrew. For many students the study of Hebrew is a sheer waste of time. Its requirement is a tradition from

the days when there were no commentaries, and when the doctrine of verbal inspiration called for microscopic exegesis of the text in the original. The historical and literary method of studying the Old Testament may be pursued intelligently without knowledge of Hebrew. Those who have acquired it can use a better class of commentaries than the books provided for Sunday-school teachers, but one can get on very well without it. In this seminary not one-fifth, but one-ninth, of the time, that is, one-third of the first year, is given to Hebrew, and it is not required afterward. Even so, in some cases it might well be remitted altogether. As to Greek, I take somewhat the same view, yet those who have studied that language in college may easily and profitably master New Testament Greek. In my judgment, German is of more value to theological students than either Hebrew or Greek.

As to location, there are advantages in a university and in a city. But a country town near a city has also great advantages. Study is without distractions, the spiritual life is promoted without going into "retreats" for part of the time, and yet there is easy access to the city.

I doubt the wisdom of sending students to spend a few weeks each year with pastors. The students come from active work in the churches and may teach in churches near the seminary. A better arrangement is that of becoming assistants, for a year or two after graduation, to pastors of large churches, an arrangement which is now adopted in several Congregational parishes, and is common among Episcopalians.

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President Harper's position as head of a great new institution in a great new city gives him a peculiar advantage. He is unfettered by precedents, and he can test the schemes which he is so expert in framing. But he has his disadvantages. He has never been a pastor, a preacher, or even a student of theology. Actual experience in these relations would, I think, have made him somewhat more slow in charging to our theological seminaries, and especially to their defective method and organization, so large a share of the present shortcomings of the churches. The remedy which he suggests is a radical one: the seminaries should have a metropolitan and university location, and seminary training should be conducted by purely university methods.

Further experience will possibly convince him that this remedy is impracticable, inasmuch as it would involve the abolition in his own denomination of all seminaries but his own.

John Foster once wrote an essay on *Some Causes by which Evangelical Religion has been Rendered Unacceptable to Men of Cultivated Taste*. I do not know that among these causes he mentioned theological seminaries. The fact that so large a proportion of the able preachers and pastors of our city churches have come from the country seminaries should have led Dr. Harper to qualify his intimation that church abandonment and pastoral weakness are the product of these institutions. They are without doubt capable of improvement, but they have made the Christian ministry in America the most intelligent of the learned professions, and it is greatly to their credit that with means so insufficient they have done so much for public instruction.

The chief mistake of the article before us, in my judgment, is that of its point of view. It is conceived from the point of view of the scholar and specialist, rather than from the point of view of the preacher and pastor. It does not take account of the real object of the theological seminary—that of fitting the average candidate for the ministry to do his work as preacher and pastor in the average church. Granting that a young man has had three years of academic and four years of college training, what theological studies should he ordinarily pursue to fit him for ordination and for success in his calling? Dr. Harper would give him one hurried year of encyclopædia, to show him what there is to be learned, and would then remit him to the pursuit of some specialty. His principal work must be done in some one of the six departments of Old Testament, New Testament, church history, systematic theology, sociology, or homiletics, while theme-writing, natural science, psychology, pedagogy, music, or medicine may be given the second place in his attention. I do not understand, however, that either Hebrew or Greek would be required in any portion of the course.

The scheme seems to me exposed to both general and special objections. The general objection is that it fails to give to the average college graduate that all-round preparation for his work which the churches may reasonably require. One year does not suffice to give that thorough grounding in the Hebrew Bible, the Greek Testament, church history, systematic theology, homiletics, pastoral theology, and elocution which is indispensable to a well-equipped ministry. Three years are barely sufficient for this elementary work; and, until this

elementary work is finished, special studies have no proper place. In this respect the theological seminary should conform its policy to that of the best schools of other professions. In order to graduation, the school of law insists upon the candidate's attainment of a certain minimum of knowledge with regard to all the main branches of legal science, and much knowledge about contracts does not make up for the absence of knowledge about evidence. The school of medicine will not graduate a man who has never studied anatomy, even though he may be an expert in *materia medica*. The Military Academy at West Point and the Naval Academy at Annapolis provide a comprehensive training in all the branches pertinent to their respective professions, and specialization is not encouraged until the student graduates and is assigned to some particular department of service. In a similar way the theological seminary should regard its office to be the furnishing of the most thorough elementary theological training, leaving special studies to be pursued after the seminary course is finished.

To allow college graduates to omit Hebrew and Greek from their theological studies insures, to my mind, a great decline in the learning and influence of our coming ministry. I am one of those who believe that it is richly worth the while for the student to take Hebrew, even though he never uses it after his three-years' course is over. There is an understanding of Hebraistic usage which can be gotten in no other way, and the oriental atmosphere and phraseology of the class-room tinge all his after-studies. No man, moreover, knows whether he has the capacity for Semitic studies until he has attacked them. Many good Hebrew scholars will be lost to the church when Hebrew is made purely elective. And the argument applies yet more forcibly to Greek. That men who have had a classical training in college should be permitted to drop their Greek on entering the seminary seems to me a policy most irrational and disastrous.

On the other hand, the admission into the theological course of certain other studies which properly belong to the college unduly hampers the course, makes it less strictly theological, and takes time from the very work for which the traditional three years is already far too short. It is quite true that many a student needs training in English. But it is quite beside the purpose of a theological seminary to teach him mere English. He should have learned this before he came to the seminary, nor can the seminary be expected to make up his deficiencies. Some seminary students, college graduates though they

are, cannot spell—shall the seminary teach spelling? And so with English grammar and natural science. Let the seminaries exert pressure upon the colleges, and the colleges in turn upon the academies; let the preliminary training be made more thorough; but do not let the time of theological instructors be frittered away in teaching what belongs to the lower stages of education.

I am far from denying that the theological seminaries do now incidentally help men in all these respects to supply the defects of their early training. Much of science and of philosophy is taught, though not systematically and of set purpose, in connection with the department of systematic theology; and much of rhetoric and composition is taught, in connection with the department of homiletics. But to make these things main features of a theological course would be to defeat the purpose of that course, which can be successful only as it gives time predominantly to theology. Similarly I dissent from Dr. Harper's plan of attending to the religious life of the seminary by providing monastic "retreats," in which religion can be specifically cultivated. Let the spirit of instructors be what it should be, and no such retreats will be needed. Daily prayer will obviate the necessity of special monthly or half-yearly periods of seclusion.

The scheme unintentionally plays into the hands of those who regard the Scriptures as a somewhat antiquated source of doctrine, who doubt the possibility of deducing from them any consistent scheme of theology, and who esteem modern inspiration as better than that which is three thousand or more years old. It permits a man to enter the ministry without systematic instruction as to the harmony and unity of Christian truth, while at the same time it encourages a one-sided and fragmentary development that promises the exploitation of multitudinous eccentricities of belief in our churches. We could not, and would not, prevent individual interpretations of Scripture, but we would prepare the way for these by a thorough study of theology as a system. There is such a thing as the analogy of faith, and every preacher should know something of it. The churches demand rounded and well-equipped men in the ministry, and we should not give them mere specialists or pedagogues. They need men, indeed, who can think, and who know how to correlate what they learn in one department with what they learn in another. But thinking and correlating, to be of value, presuppose an acquaintance with elementary facts. This acquaintance with facts our seminaries seek to give. Dr. Harper's plan, I fear, would lead to partial inductions and premature conclusions—a science free

from traditions, indeed, but a science that is falsely so called. The seminaries are not universities; they are professional schools. They were founded in order to make preachers, pastors, and missionaries, and not to make technical scholars and scientific specialists. With their present endowment and equipment they cannot do the work of the university; nor, if they could, would it be well for them to attempt it.

There is one suggestion in Dr. Harper's article which, in spite of these animadversions, I think of value. It is his suggestion that in all our seminaries a larger amount of time should be given to the study of the English Bible. But to do this requires, in the case of most of us, not only an additional professor and an increased endowment, but also the addition of another year to the course of study. At present we do what we can with the time at our disposal. We give the student a start in his Bible study, teach him a method of interpretation, and give him an example of thorough and minute investigation of single Scripture books. A larger and broader treatment of Scripture is, indeed, desirable. We believe that our best students learn this for themselves. Since we have our option to teach small portions thoroughly or large portions superficially, we choose the former alternative, and we believe that every discerning pupil approves our choice.

The fixed curriculum of our theological seminaries is not the same thing that it was fifty years ago. It has grown with the needs of the churches, and it expresses the wisdom of several generations. I have hope that larger means will in time enable us to lengthen our course and to do a better work. President Harper has done well in calling attention to one present need. But the need is not to be supplied by giving up our requirement of Hebrew and Greek. If these come to be neglected, study of the English Bible will be discounted with them. Let us do the one, and not leave the other undone. And, when our students have finished their systematic and elementary studies in the main branches of theology, we will gladly send some of the brightest and aptest of them, not to the Chicago Theological Seminary, nor to the Chicago Divinity School—for we so far agree with Dr. Harper as to think that the name of that should be changed—but to the University of Chicago, to prepare themselves, by post-graduate work, for professorships and for other special lines of service, for which, fortunately, the average preacher and pastor is not qualified, and to which he is not called.

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Dr. Harper's article entitled, "Shall the Theological Curriculum be Modified, and How?", interests me very much; partly because I see that Dr. Harper has arrived, by independent observation and reflection, at certain conclusions which I published in 1883 in the then *Princeton Review*; but chiefly because he recommends even more radical changes in the prevailing methods of theological education than those I suggested sixteen years ago. Dr. Harper recognizes the fact that election of studies in theological seminaries has become essential—a doctrine which I have preached for many years—and he also states very forcibly the imperative need of modifying the exaggerated beneficiary system which has so enfeebled the ministry. The uniformity of program becomes more and more harmful, because it is now contrasted with the freedom of study obtaining in the graduate schools which have come into existence within the last twenty-five years; and the degrading effects of the indiscriminate beneficiary system are so manifest that no argument on that subject is any longer required.

These are seminary evils, and may there be remedied; but, in my judgment, there is something deeper which keeps young men of promise out of the ministry. Dr. Harper speaks as if it were the seminary which has become unattractive to the best young men. In my belief it is more the profession than the seminary which is unattractive. To many young men the ministry seems to be a profession which is not as untrammelled as the other learned professions, and which subjects a man, as he grows older and wiser, to grave temptation to insincerity. The youth going out of college, who has obtained some clear, though partial, view of various departments of knowledge, perceives in them all a steady expansion, or at least a continual change. He knows that many things habitually taught thirty years ago have proved to be untrue; or, at least, have been replaced by more comprehensive or more accurate doctrine. He observes in the other learned professions that men expect to change their minds as years go on, and do not hold at sixty just the same opinions which they held at thirty. He sees throughout society a general expectation of new light and new truth in every field of human knowledge. But, on the other hand, the minister seems to be expected to hold throughout life a fixed, unchanging body of opinions; and his livelihood, or at least his comfort in life, seems to depend on the unchangeableness of his convictions on subjects which relate to the highest interests of humanity. The young student of today looks with grave suspicion on this situation of the ministry; he can hardly conceive that fixity of opinion on the most

difficult subjects of human speculation can be consistent with candor or with logical precision of thought. Now, candor and incisive clearness in reasoning are the intellectual qualities which the best young men of today most respect and admire. They perceive plainly enough the immense ethical opportunity which the preacher enjoys; but they are afraid that this opportunity is purchased in many instances by the sacrifice of candor in public speech, and of the delights of a lifelong search for new truth, or can be used to the full only by one who lacks intellectual curiosity and the power of clear thinking. To remedy the main evils in the seminary will not suffice, therefore, to recruit the profession with the best young men. It will be further necessary to modify the adverse conditions under which the ministerial profession now labors. The community must come to believe that the ministry shares the modern scientific spirit, which implies curiosity, freedom, and an indefinite reach for truth-seeking.

Dr. Harper dwells on the undemocratic quality of the theological curriculum. While I agree with him that the ordinary theological seminary is out of sympathy with democracy, I believe that it is not so much the seminary, or its curriculum, which is undemocratic, as it is the creeds or the rituals of the churches which the seminary furnishes with ministers. Are not the Evangelical creeds correctly described as exclusive? Is not a modern Protestant church a highly exclusive organization? Here again it seems to me that Dr. Harper does not go to the root of the matter, when he complains that the seminary is undemocratic. Primitive Christianity was democracy itself; but a modern Evangelical church is distinctly aristocratic for this world and the next.

Dr. Harper insists that the seminary should not be a place "in which men are to learn certain views, or to receive and adopt certain opinions." Nothing can be more timely and admirable than this doctrine; but so long as ministers are educated in denominational seminaries, expressly maintained to educate men for churches which hold certain stiff, unchanging creeds, how can the theological seminary be anything else than a place where young men are taught certain views which they are expected to hold for life? The denominational seminary is, in practice, a place where students adopt certain opinions and undertake to promulgate them.

In some of his recommendations Dr. Harper is less specific than one could wish. Thus, what is that general and comprehensive knowledge of the Scriptures which, in his view, all should acquire? Is it an

approximate and superficial knowledge, as against a precise and thorough knowledge? It cannot be a knowledge of only parts of the Scriptures, for it would not then be comprehensive. Yet, if all theological students are really to obtain a general and comprehensive knowledge of the Scriptures, what else will they have time for? One is driven to suppose that Dr. Harper intends by this formidable phrase some outline or sketch of the Scriptures, else it certainly could not be required of all. In another connection Dr. Harper complains very properly that neither the college student nor the theological student of today knows his English Bible.

Many of Dr. Harper's recommendations in detail are admirable. He objects strenuously to the requirement of Hebrew within the seminary; and it is greatly to be hoped that his objection will be taken to heart by the managers of all theological seminaries. The Divinity School of Harvard University ceased several years ago to require the study of the Hebrew language. The study of the Hebrew language in most theological seminaries has long been a farce; and Dr. Harper truly says that no greater farce can be found in any field of educational work. Nevertheless, as I pointed out in 1883, it remains very desirable that every student of theology should have a fair knowledge of Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and German. An adequate knowledge of these languages should have been obtained in college by every student who was looking forward to the ministry; and all theological schools should require a college education of all candidates for admission.

Dr. Harper recommends an increased attention to English literature and to the English language. He says, indeed, that there should be a special chair of instruction in the English language in every well-organized seminary. The substance of this recommendation I heartily agree with; yet I cannot but think that the study of English literature, with practice in writing, and careful instruction in the elements of a good style, ought to form a part of the college education of candidates for the ministry. So, too, with regard to the knowledge of psychology, political economy, history, and science for which Dr. Harper pleads. The elements of these subjects are all prerequisites for theological study, and should, therefore, be included in the college training of candidates for the ministry. It is not to be expected that the seminary should provide for the elementary teaching of these subjects.

But assuming that the candidate for admission to the theological seminary brings with him an adequate collegiate training, I entirely agree with Dr. Harper that the theological curriculum itself requires

grave changes. If free election of studies is allowed within the seminary, and courses are provided in sufficient variety to give the student a fair degree of choice, intelligent experimenting by both teachers and students will in a few years develop the most desirable and useful combinations of studies. The courses offered must, of course, include Old Testament and New Testament studies, ecclesiastical history, comparative religion, the philosophy of religion, the history of the Christian doctrines, and scientific methods of charity and reform.

Finally, I value highly Dr. Harper's recommendation of "clinical" instruction. He has in mind actual observation of the moral and social conditions in crowded districts — observation strictly analogous to that of the physician at the bedside or the geologist in the field. His recommendation of an apprenticeship for every young graduate in theology is also an interesting and useful one. An active pastor in a city church could nowadays make good use of such apprentices. This recommendation naturally accompanies another of Dr. Harper's suggestions — namely, that the theological seminary distinctly undertake to produce for the service of the church, not only preachers, but teachers and administrative officers for its charitable and social work. The seminary's requirements would, of course, be different for these different groups; but a broad elective system in the seminary would lend itself to the best preparation of members of any one of the groups.

Dr. Harper seems to contemplate some coöperation between theological seminaries and medical schools for the production of practical workers in both fields. This project seems to me eminently unsafe. If the church is to employ medical officers, they should be men of medical training exclusively. The church should not become responsible for an inferior sort of medical officer.

Every president of a university will, of course, agree with Dr. Harper that the theological curriculum can best be carried on in connection with a university, and preferably with an urban university. In no other way can the necessary broadening of theological education be so promptly and effectually brought about.

Dr. Harper's paper ought to be seriously considered by every board of trustees and every faculty of a theological school in the United States.

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President Harper's paper on the theological curriculum is full of valuable suggestions and sagacious criticisms. His mind is virile, eagerly observant, committed to progress, impatient of unreality. The helpfulness of such a mind, as a factor in educational evolution, is large. It challenges traditions, it disturbs quiescent routines, it invades the dusty security of obsolete methods. Its sturdy questioning of things long taken for granted reminds one of Browning's reference to Luther in *Paracelsus*:

His plain denial of established points
Ages had sanctified and men supposed
Could never be oppugned while earth was under
And heaven above them.

In no department of education should the frank questioning of methods be more welcome than in the divinity school. Ever present is the danger that a veil, curiously woven of natural and artificial elements, shall be let down between the theological seminary and the world, separating the one from the other; and, from the point of view of the seminary, obstructing its sense of "the requirement of modern times." To rend this veil in twain is, we assume, the motive of President Harper. This, at all events, he does, and with a two-edged sword, which, while it cuts through much that ought to be shorn away from the theological curriculum, strikes at some things which, in our judgment, ought resolutely to be maintained. We cannot too earnestly express our concurrence with President Harper in his statement of the ends to be held in mind if the curriculum of the theological seminary is to be modified in accordance "with the assured results of modern psychology and pedagogy, as well as with the demands which have been made apparent by our common experience." We believe that the work should be so adjusted as to render it attractive to the best men; that allowance should be made for the taste and capacity of the individual student; that seminary work should encourage lifelong habits of study which should grow stronger from year to year; and that that training is demanded "which, upon the whole, will best adapt the individual to his environment." Among the many suggestions and criticisms contained in President Harper's fertile paper we wish to select seven for special comment, as representing the sound wisdom and common sense of his main position.

Against two traditional practices of seminary life—its monastic seclusion and its enfeebling benefaction—the president of the Univer-

sity of Chicago lifts up his voice in tones which should echo eastward and westward :

1. *Monastic seclusion* is one of the most subtle perils of seminary life. From the animating and wholesome excitements of the university and the college men relapse into the restricted and hypercritical world of the seminary. If allowed to live apart from the world, as within a monastery, they run enormous risks. Petty jealousies tend to obliterate noble and sacred ambitions; scholasticism unrelieved by social service hardens into unspirituality; lack of contact with men of affairs begets strange and impossible standards of conduct. All this should be changed. If existing rural seminaries cannot be removed to towns, no new seminaries should be founded in country places. The student who is to give his life for men should live among men, and among those who are working for men. Along with his scholastic training should proceed his training in social and evangelistic efficiency through contact at short range with the great human facts of life.

2. *Enfeebling benefaction*.—The noblest motives have animated the donors of scholarship funds to theological seminaries, but grave perils hover in the train of such gifts. A man's comparative poverty ought not to constitute the primary ground of his eligibility to partake of scholarship funds. Many poor men seek to enter the ministry, but poverty is, in itself, no qualification for the ministry. Where such funds are administered as charitable gifts they tend to enfeeble the recipients. They differentiate the seminary unfavorably from other professional schools; they breed unmanly jealousies; they imperil self-respect; they tempt to untruth. They should be removed from the eleemosynary basis and be placed upon the competitive basis. Men should win them by merit, not plead for them in supplicatory letters. This system of enfeebling benefaction cannot too soon, nor too absolutely, be broken up. The ministry cannot hold its own beside other professions until the pauperizing of its students is brought to an end.

In addition to his salutary protests against erroneous conditions still clinging to the seminary system, President Harper advocates certain lines of progress :

1. *Larger provision for the training of teachers*.—His observations upon this subject are most wise. Certain men have teaching gifts of which they may be unconscious until the strenuous theological disciplines awaken those slumbering powers. For the development of such men provision must be made if the schools of theology are to equal in academic distinction the schools of medicine and of law. Special

opportunities should be presented to men of very high grades of intellectual power, whereby they may specialize long and under the most favorable conditions in their chosen departments. These opportunities should not be limited to residence in foreign universities. Provision should be made for very advanced specialization in this country, in the higher theological disciplines.

2. *The lengthening of the seminary course.*—The traditional “three years” should be augmented by larger and richer periods of time for those who will use them. The “fourth year” is essential; with a fifth, sixth, and seventh year made possible under an extensive scheme of graduate work leading to the degree of doctor in divinity. Graduate work should not be regarded chiefly as the opportunity for men in the pastorate to take a breathing spell from active toil, for the recruiting of their intellectual energies. Valuable as is such a function of the graduate curriculum, it is secondary to the major function of mature, comprehensive preparation for life work on the part of those who are to begin their ministry within the searching and exacting conditions of the twentieth century. The ministry in days to come is “not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly.”

3. *The development of the seminar method.*—The “assured results of modern psychology and pedagogy” contain no law more fundamental than the law of self-activity. From the kindergarten to the professional school that law is operative wherever scientific methods are recognized. The seminar is the highest academic illustration of self-activity. To deal effectively with modern problems of theology, of history, and of exegesis is impracticable without the seminar.

4. *University connection.*—The enforced limitations of the theological curriculum shut out the possibility of introducing science to the extent demanded by President Harper. But the need in this direction is met by university connection. Let a seminary enter into relations of comity with a university, let the use of the university privileges be restricted to men of comparatively high scholarship, let the university hold its theological guests strictly accountable for faithful work, and a vast step forward is taken in the unification of an academic system.

5. *Lay training.*—Candidates for the ministry ought not to have a monopoly of the rich advantages collected in a modern seminary. University extension can be applied to the seminary as reasonably as to the university. Lay training is university extension applied to the seminary. One of the most urgent questions of the day relates to the

religious training of the young. The theory and practice of teaching in religious schools are far behind the theory and practice of teaching in secular schools. The seminary that is awake to modern requirements will accept as a part of its duty some system of extension lectures that shall provide for the systematic training of the laity as teachers in religious schools.

These are brief but appreciative comments on matters urged with singular clearness by President Harper. We could wish that his words might sink down into the hearts of all who have part in building the curricula of the many seminaries in this country.

But we are compelled to record with equal earnestness our dissent from certain positions taken in this very able paper.

1. We dissent from Dr. Harper's contention that Hebrew should be made elective, and from his conclusion to that effect founded largely upon the neglect of Hebrew study by men in the active ministry. That such neglect prevails throughout the ministry in this country is scarcely to be doubted. Hebrew is not the only branch of learning increasingly discarded by men toiling under mechanical systems of church life that compel ministers too often to leave the Word of God and to serve tables. But even the voluntary neglect of the study of the Word of God in the original is not conclusive evidence of the inexpediency of requiring that study to be extensively undertaken in the seminary. Our contention is that the study of Hebrew is infinitely more than a linguistic exercise. It is the profound investigation of one part of the Sacred Scriptures, wherein divine truth is conveyed through the Hebraic medium. The truth cannot be fully known by him who is to teach it until his mind has viewed it through the original medium of revelation. In the day that Hebrew is made elective it will be rejected by four-fifths of the men that enter the seminary; and the rejection of the Semitic discipline means the arrest and the decline of Old Testament study.

For a short period the church would not perceive the consequences issuing from the decline of Old Testament study. But the logic of time would reveal them. We are entering an age wherein materialism will contend with superficial spirituality for the control of the church. The saviors of the church will be those who are filled with the very life and essence of the Word of God, and who have entered through toil and pain and vigilance into its profoundest meanings. The doctrine of expediency, which would relegate the severe study of any part of God's Word to the realm of choice, making it to depend on the

personal inclinations of untrained youth, must, if it prevails, threaten the church with a deluge of utilitarianism which shall sweep out of sight, not sacred scholarship only, but the very landmarks of intelligent biblical knowledge.

2. We must dissent also from President Harper's doctrine of specialization as applied to students of theology. We believe in specialization as a condition of broad efficiency. We believe that seminaries were made for the world, not the world for seminaries, and that to train the ministry along traditional lines, unrelated to the imperative demands of modern life, is a crime against society and against the theological students who, thus trained, are flung out into their age crippled by professional malpractice. But specialization unlimited by antecedent obedience to prescribed routine is a questionable blessing. Its likeliest fruit is the one-sided life. And the ministry cannot be risked in the hands of one-sided men, whether they be specialists in administration or specialists in preaching (to employ President Harper's illustrations). Men may have special adaptations, and strong men do have special adaptations. Nevertheless, all who are to go forth as ambassadors of the one Lord Jesus Christ require to have in common a certain discipline in the rudiments of the Word of God, in the history of Christianity, in the substantial elements of belief, in the cardinal principles of the cure of souls. Specialization should be encouraged in the later year, or later years, of the course, but in the divinity school, as in the medical school, there is a certain amount of foundation work that all men must do in common. And the first year of the divinity school should make large requirements of the men who are undertaking the public ministry of Christ and the public preaching of the ancient and impregnable Word of God.

3. We must also dissent from President Harper's tendency (born of his noble earnestness) to overstate the backwardness of the modern seminary to adjust itself to present-day conditions. If there is overstatement, it proceeds from motives that do honor to his candor and to his eagerness to promote the efficiency of the ministry. But we cannot agree with him when he says that, "while the environment of the seminary has utterly changed in this century, the seminary itself has practically remained at a standstill." We think that there are seminaries moving rapidly toward readjustments in harmony with new requirements. There are seminaries in this country where monastic seclusion no longer exists, being supplanted by the active work of the students in the social problems of great cities; there are

seminaries where the enfeebling system of benefactions has been put away for a merit system of graded bursaries; there are seminaries that, by richly endowed fellowships and by the establishment of graduate courses, are making special provision for the training of teachers; there are seminaries that exalt seminar work, that maintain university connections, that are evolving plans for lay training.

We are, perhaps, more hopeful than President Harper, more optimistic, for the theological curriculum as it already has come to be in some of the seminaries; but we rejoice that his awakening and educating paper has been written, and we believe that the discussions suggested by it will give large impulse to a forward movement already begun.

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The theological seminary aims at science and at skill. What science? Either a knowledge of all religions, or a knowledge of a particular religion. What skill? The skill to apply the truths of this science to the problems of human life and society. It may aim to produce both science and skill in the same pupil; or it may aim to produce the science in some and the skill in others.

A theological seminary might develop its curriculum from the point of view of comparative religion. There is a slight suggestion of this in President Harper's propositions. Of course, to do this thoroughly we should need to teach the Vedas and the other "sacred books of the East" in the original. The systematic theology arrived at would be a synthesis of the generic principles of all religions and the specific principles of the ultimate religion. This is very enticing, but has an infinite number of difficulties, of which I may name two: (1) The acquisition of such a theology would be possible to very few indeed, and to them only after long and painful study. (2) The workers in a church based upon such a theology would be slaves of routine. We should have the old separation again. Theology would be sundered from life, the thought of the church from the activities of its ministry, and the end would be the ruin of both.

Take, then, a narrower basis for the curriculum, the Bible. Unfortunately Protestantism forsook its *magna charta*. It reverted generally to the system of Aquinas. Only instead of the *summa* of doctrine for the church universal we had *summas* for the churches particular. Let

us return to the *magna charta* of the reformers. Teach the Scriptures, whether in the original or not; teach the Scriptures! Faraday understood Galvani very well, without learning Italian; intelligent men and women can learn the contents of the Bible without Hebrew and Greek. I agree with President Harper that to learn what the law and the prophets mean in wholesome English is far more important than a confused and a thoroughly inadequate knowledge of them in the original. I agree, too, with his suggestion of a scientific training for theologians, if for no other reason than the inadequate training of our students in modern modes of reasoning. The old curriculum of the college aimed to afford both a logical and a linguistic training. It did not; and, therefore, perished. But the new curriculum is no better. No wonder that men flounder in the depths of higher criticism. Their logical training and their linguistic outfit are wholly inadequate for the problems that they confront.

Two groups, however, seem to me sufficient: a group of students set apart for the severer task of investigation; and a group of students in applied Christianity. I use this much-abused term in its proper sense: an application of the teachings of Jesus to the individual and the community. This involves, first of all, the acquisition of disciples, and, secondly, their perfection in the graces of the kingdom of Christ. It will require Christians to apply Christianity. And the seminary must train up ministers who can persuade men to become such.

In rare cases the scholar and the practical worker may be combined. Men of the type of the late Dean Church are greatly needed in the modern church, uniting, as he did, the scholar, the thinker, the preacher, the pastor, and the administrator. And I dread the overspecialization that tends to destroy this type. Such men will naturally find their place among the investigators during their student days. Now, to these investigators—and I would admit none to their ranks who lack the endowments and the training for research—to these I would open the entire field of theological inquiry. But the practical workers should be instructed only in ascertained truth and in the views of noted and acknowledged teachers of the gospel. The theology of the Scriptures should be made the center of the cognate questions of philosophy and science; the anthropology of the Scriptures for cognate questions of psychology, ethics, and sociology; the historical development of Christianity, beginning with Judaism, the center of all cognate questions of history. Exegesis should support the three great departments of systematic, historical, and practical theology. And

these students of applied Christianity should be required to know every essential Scripture, *i. e.*, every Scripture necessary to the understanding of the biblical teachings about God and Christ, the church and the Spirit, man and society, the nation and the world. If this could be done in the original, all the better. But the Protestant principle requires that it should be done, and done thoroughly.

There is, however, a yet narrower basis for a curriculum which I prefer—a New Testament basis. I would make the curriculum Christocentric; subordinating the old to the new, other religions to the religion of Jesus, and bringing all the sciences into captivity to Jesus Christ and his kingdom. The present curriculum is based upon the theory of inspired verses, each having equal value with every other. It is not based upon the theory of inspired books of which Jesus Christ is the key.

President Harper's suggestions might—many of them at least—be adapted to this Christo-centric idea. Thus the general course might include New Testament history and theology; the theology and literature of the Old Testament in their relations to Jesus and his kingdom; the history of Christ's kingdom since its beginning at Jerusalem; a study of Christ's teachings in their relations to science, to philosophy, and to existing society. But all this should be in order to apply the science thus acquired to christianizing men and the world in which they live. Clinics, retreats, apprenticeship to active pastors? By all means, every one of them! Encouragement of special aptitudes, musical, medical, scientific, by means of neighboring schools? Certainly. But I repeat, I would have two groups only, not four. I am willing to separate the investigator from the minister. But never the preacher from the pastor. The preacher's persuasiveness and power (not his popularity) depend upon his acquaintance with actual life. We need, not men to gather crowds, but men that can gather Christians. And the pastor requires for the work of these days an intelligence and a skill of simple speech that approach genius. As to electives, they might be permitted to these prospective ministers in the three great departments. New Testament study, though, should be continued throughout the course. But the topics selected should bear chiefly upon the urgent problems of our age. These prospective ministers should aim at science, only to increase their skill in dealing with men and communities.

Psychology, science, literature, pedagogy should be studied somewhere. If in the seminary, three years will not suffice. President

Harper's plan involves, in its entirety, a revolution of the churches. Possibly the Christians of our large cities may be organized ultimately into great communities, demanding a varied supply of preachers, pastors, and musical and medical workers, all operating under a single chief. Just now, however, the urgent cry is for ministers in the large sense of the term; men who can gather and foster Christian communities; men who can persuade and direct the intelligent as well as the excitable; men who can perceive the necessities and the opportunities of their environment and of their age; men who can illuminate the perplexed, and minister to the diseased mind; men who add to their experience knowledge, and who go about doing good. These the seminaries might and should furnish.

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